

REDISTRICTING AND CALIFORNIA'S ENVIRONMENT(S)



California League of
Conservation Voters
EDUCATION FUND

February 9, 2021

*CA Citizens'
Redistricting
Commission*



California League of
Conservation Voters

Introduction and Agenda:

- **Agenda:**
 - Why CLCV and Redistricting?
 - Thinking about the Environment
 - Thinking about COIs
 - Some Examples:
 - Questions to Consider
- **Caveat Auditor:**
 - This is not at all comprehensive re: EJ, conservation, or public lands
 - This *will not* articulate COIs/lines
 - This *will* refer to 2011 CRC decisions and their consequences.



Why CLCV and Redistricting?

“Inequality and climate change are the twin challenges of our time, and more democracy is the answer to both.” – Heather McGhee, Demos

- **Why**

- “Hard-to-reach” communities overlap with environmental injustice
 - Historically disenfranchised by race
 - Working-class
 - Chronic health problems
 - Low language-access
 - People who carry pollution are far from power – both politics and energy

- **What:**

- Supporting transparent and fair process
 - Taking part in the CRC application/selection process
 - Present at CRC hearings
 - Commenting
 - Promoting and presenting environmental, conservation, and public space advocates
 - Stand ready to support the Commission as thought partner and resource!

“Environment?”

“The environment is where we live, work, and play.”

- “Environmental justice” isn’t a COI – it’s a statewide frame, a set of glasses.
- You’re in “the environment” right now, in this conversation.
- Natural and human-built features create, divide, and define communities (of interest)
- People *know and are actively learning* their communities and their environments.
- “Urban” vs. “environment” isn’t a useful dichotomy
 - City dwellers use green space and public space, with varying degrees of success
 - Rural communities close to big national parks, forests, and monuments travel out to major urban centers for resources – sometimes across state lines.

“Community of Interest?”

“A community of interest is a **contiguous population which shares common social and economic interests** that should be included within a single district for purposes of its effective and fair representation.

Examples of such shared interests are those common to an urban area, a rural area, an industrial area, or an agricultural area, **and those common to areas in which the people share similar living standards, use the same transportation facilities, have similar work opportunities, or have access to the same media of communication relevant to the election process.**

Communities of interest shall not include relationships with political parties, incumbents, or political candidates.”

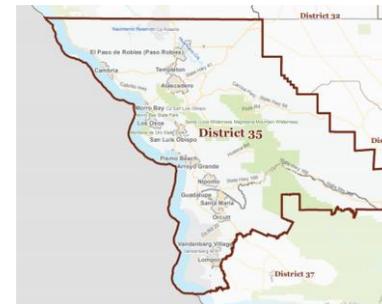
-Section 2(d)(4) of Article XXI of the California Constitution

Natural Spaces

- Geography creates communities
 - Natural proximity
 - Existing borders defined by natural features (Colorado River)
 - Pre-industrial capacity to cross hostile landscapes informs settlement patterns
- Economic, racial, and historic political boundaries informed by natural features
 - Communities of color and Native populations driven off “desirable” lands
 - Settlement, conquest, and land-grant politics define institutions and supporting cities
 - Redlining and land use interact with land/air features to create compounding health impacts on fenceline communities

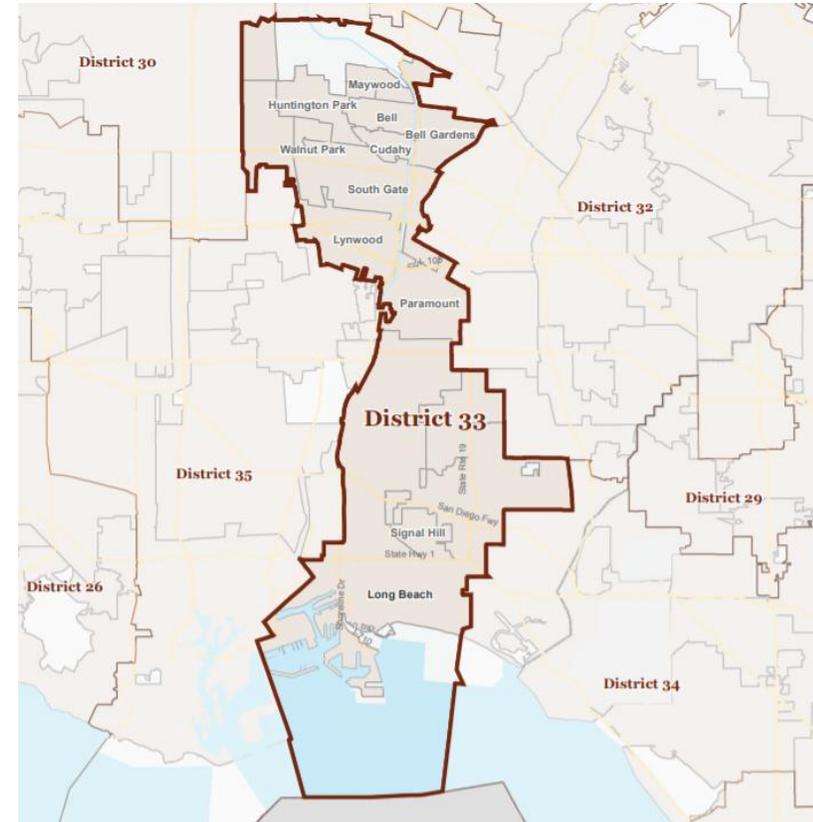
Natural Spaces

- Coastal districts
 - 2011: Central Coast (AD 35, 37; SD 17, 19; CA-24)
 - 2011: North Coast (AD/SD/CA 02)
- Themes
 - Single defining feature
 - Compact(?)



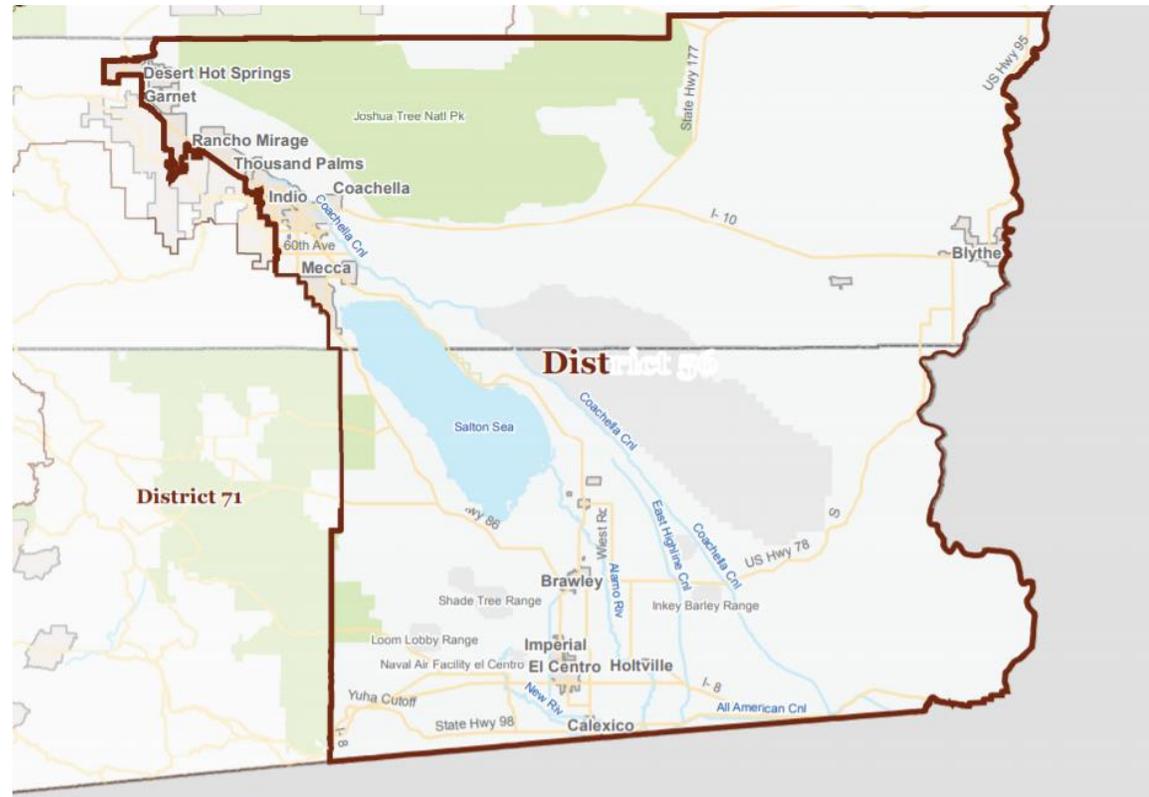
Built Spaces

- 2011 Example: I-710 and the Port of Long Beach (SD 33)
- December discussion of putting LB in w/ OC for outreach
- The district is defined by an economic feature, a transportation feature, and an environmental feature, all overlapping, none of which overlap with the County of Orange.



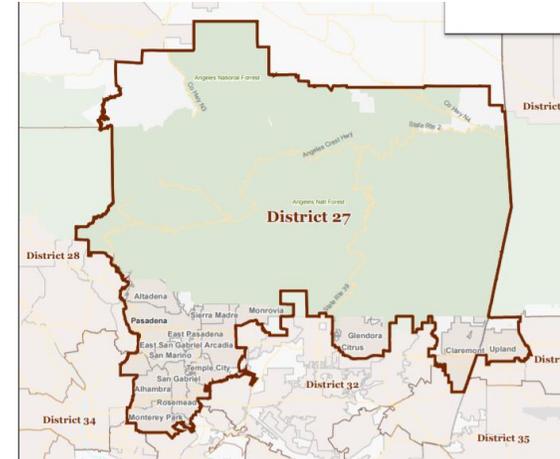
How Do These Interact?

- Remediation projects and immediate crises:
 - The Salton Sea
 - Air pollution articulates a community across counties
 - Overlaps substantively with historically Latino and historically agricultural communities of interest



How Do These Interact?

- 2011 Example: Angeles NF and the I-210 Corridor (CA-27, 28, 32)
- Communities tied to a public land – people who use/rely on it
- Other examples
 - CA-08 (Victorville, Mammoth, Bishop) overlaps multiple bioregions and public lands:
 - Mono Lake + Eastern Sierra
 - Inyo NF
 - CA Desert Nat'l Monuments
 - Joshua Tree NP
 - Death Valley



Points of Departure: Moving Forward

- Environmental, conservation, and environmental justice COIs will overlap – not neatly or exactly, but substantively – with other COIs articulated by hard-to-reach populations.
- Environmental justice communities build and hold deep knowledge of their own homes.
- Many public lands and EJ communities currently lack representation on or before the CRC.



QUESTIONS?



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